

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PGOV, SCUL, GE, US

SUBJECT: PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT: GDR AMBASSADOR CALLED-IN

REF: A) BERLIN 1787 ; B) STATE 63405

1. GDR AMBASSADOR SIEBER WAS CALLED IN TO DEPARTMENT
AFTERNOON OF MARCH 13 AND TOLD BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT
SECRETARY GOODBY OF LAST MINUTE DIFFICULTIES BEING
CAUSED IN BERLIN CONCERNING USE OF AMBASSADOR'S
TITLE IN CONNECTION WITH PAUL STRAND PUBLICITY.

2. IN EXPRESSING OUR DISPLEASURE, GOODBY MADE
FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) WE ARE FAMILIAR WITH EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS ON
BERLIN AND SHOULD CONDUCT OUR RELATIONS IN A WAY WHICH
WILL NOT HIGHLIGHT OUR DIFFERENCES ON THE SUBJECT OR
CAUSE THEM TO BECOME AN OBSTACLE TO IMPROVING THOSE
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RELATIONS.

B) IN THE CASE OF THE AMERICAN FILM WEEK AND AGAIN
THIS WEEK IN THE CASE OF THE PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT,
HOWEVER, THE GDR HAS REGRETTABLY CHOSEN TO IGNORE
THE ABOVE DICTUM AND HAS PLACED POLITICAL OBSTACLES
IN THE WAY OF OUR PREVIOUSLY AGREED CULTURAL PLAN.

C) THE PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT HAS ALREADY ARRIVED IN BERLIN, BUT WE ARE PREPARED TO CANCEL THE EXHIBIT, AT SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL COST, IF THE GDR REFUSES TO LIST THE AMBASSADOR'S PROPER TITLE, WHICH DOES POLITICAL DAMAGE TO NO ONE, IN THE INVITATION AND DESCRIPTIVE MATERIAL FOR THE EXHIBIT.

D) IF SUCH A CANCELLATION BECOMES NECESSARY, WE WILL ALSO BE FORCED TO EXAMINE MORE CLOSELY THOSE ASPECTS OF THE DRESDEN EXHIBIT AND OTHER GDR CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS IN THIS COUNTRY THAT RELATE TO PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATION.

3. SIEBER WAS ALSO TOLD THAT EMBASSY OFFICER WOULD MAKE SIMILAR PRESENTATION TO MFA MARCH 14 AND WAS ASKED TO REPORT FULLY EXTENT OF OUR DISPLEASURE PRIOR TO THAT MEETING. HE PROMISED TO DO SO, BUT EXPRESSED TO BE PERPLEXED BY DISPUTE, CONTENDING THAT "TO THE GDR" TRANSLATES TO "IN DER DDR." HE RULED OUT "ZU DER DDR" AND "AN DER DDR" AS INCORRECT GERMAN BUT SUGGESTED THAT "BEI DER DDR" MIGHT BE A WORKABLE TRANSLATION. GOODBY REPEATED OBJECTIONS TO TRANSLATIONS THAT SUGGESTED "IN THE GDR" AND REPEATED THAT EASIEST AND PREFERRED SOLUTION IS SIMPLY TO LIST AMBASSADOR'S TITLE AS "AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."
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4. DEPARTMENT INTERPRETER, WHO TOOK PART IN INITIAL NEGOTIATIONS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS AGREES THAT "ZU DER DDR" AND "AN DER DDR" ARE LINGUISTICALLY INCORRECT AND BELIEVES THAT "BEI DER DDR" WAS SETTLED UPON AS COMPROMISE. LATTER, HE ADDS, HAS UNHELPFUL CONNOTATION OF "BELONGING TO" OR "ATTACHED TO" AND HE WOULD PREFER "FUER DIE DDR" AS BEST OF POOR RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES.

5. AS GOODBY TOLD SIEBER, WE DO NOT WISH TO ENGAGE IN CHILDISH "BATTLE OF PREPOSITIONS" AND PREFER THAT AMBASSADOR'S TITLE BE LISTED SANS PREPOSITIONS. POINT IS NOT TO HIGHLIGHT WELL-KNOWN DIFFERENCES ON BERLIN. VANCE

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